



Dodge Challenger 500 Race Report
NASCAR Sprint Cup Series
No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge
No. 45 Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge
May 10, 2008
1.366-mile Darlington (S.C.) Raceway

RACE RESULTS:

1. Kyle Busch, Toyota
 2. Carl Edwards, Ford
 3. Jeff Gordon, Chevrolet
 4. Dale Earnhardt, Jr., Chevrolet
 5. David Ragan, Ford
- 18. Bobby Labonte, Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge**
41. Kyle Petty, Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge

Kyle Busch grabbed his third victory of the season, tying him with Carl Edwards for the most in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, when he took the checkered flag in Saturday night's Dodge Challenger 500 at the Darlington Raceway. Edwards crossed the finish line second, followed by Jeff Gordon.

The new asphalt at Darlington raised the speeds around the 58-year-old oval considerably. Many predicted a caution and wreck-filled event, but the race was conducted with few severe incidents. Only eight caution flags flew, several for debris-only. The race also featured three rounds of green flag pit stops.

Bobby Labonte and the No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge team brought home a hard-fought 18th place finish on Saturday night. Labonte began the race from the 10th position, one of his best qualifying efforts of the season, and remained in the top-10 for the first 120 laps. However, as the race progressed and the temperature cooled, the No. 43 Dodge began to develop a "tight" condition and he lost a lap to the leader. On lap 235, Labonte was able to receive the "Lucky Dog" Award to get back on the lead lap. Crew chief Jeff Meendering continued to make changes to "loosen" up the chassis for Labonte. The adjustments allowed Labonte to finish as one of only 20 cars on the lead lap.

"That was a pretty demanding race," said Labonte. "Darlington is always one of the most mentally-draining races, but tonight was worse because we didn't have many cautions to

catch our breath. I'm not sure what happened to the car, but I think we fought the same thing everyone else did. The car just got so tight there after the halfway point. It was really a handful to turn. But we kept the car pretty clean and that's something to be proud of."

Kyle Petty and the No. 45 Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge finished 41st in Saturday night's event. Petty began the race from the 35th position, but caught the turn two wall with the right rear of his car on lap nine. He pulled the No. 45 Dodge into the garage for repairs on lap 11. The crew changed the entire rear end assembly and got Petty back out on lap 124. After a return trip to the garage, Petty returned to the track on lap 145 and took the checkered flag, picking up a few more points along the way.

"It just felt like a different car than what we had in practice," said Petty. "It was so tight at the start. We run right up by the wall at Darlington so there is no room for error and I just got into the wall, got a "Darlington Stripe." I hate it for Marathon and my guys, but everyone did a great job in making repairs and picking up a few points."

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will hold its annual Sprint All-Star Race on Saturday night at Lowe's (N.C.) Motor Speedway. The race will be televised on FOX. It can be heard on the Motor Racing Network (MRN) and Sirius Channel 128.